

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5930

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, March 3, 1999

Title: An act relating to expanding maternity care for at-risk mothers.

Brief Description: Expanding maternity care for at-risk mothers.

Sponsors: Senators Fairley, Patterson, McAuliffe, Fraser, Prentice, Costa, Thibaudeau, Wojahn, Spanel, Franklin, Kohl-Welles and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 3/3/99, 3/3/99 [DP-WM].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.
Signed by Senators Thibaudeau, Chair; Costa, Deccio, Franklin and Winsley.

Staff: Rhoda Jones (786-7198)

Background: Pregnant women with family incomes up to 185 percent of the federal poverty level are eligible through two months postpartum for all medical services under Medicaid. These include maternity support services and case management which are provided through the Department of Health in the form of nutrition counseling, community health nursing, psychosocial assessment and general parenting education.

Children in families with incomes up to 200 percent of the federal poverty level are eligible for medical services under Medicaid until their 19th birthday.

While their babies continue to get publically-funded medical care, women with incomes from 65-185 percent of the federal poverty level are no longer eligible for medical or support services through Medicaid after two months postpartum.

Studies have shown that the health outcomes for infants whose families receive support services improve when low-income mothers receive community nursing and support services for an extended period after delivery.

Summary of Bill: Maternity care services are extended from two months to three years postpartum for women whose family income is up to 185 percent of the federal poverty level. These services include inpatient and outpatient medical care, case management, health assessments, parent education, nutrition counseling, and transportation.

The department is directed to phase in the extended coverage, starting with an initial plan that includes one rural and one urban county.

A maternity care endowment fund is created in the state treasury to accept private donations and funds from other sources. Principal and earnings are to be spent solely on the expansion program without appropriation.

Business and occupation tax credits are authorized up to 50 percent of the donated sum. Total tax credits allowed may not exceed \$20 million. Requirements related to tax credits are described.

Appropriation: Unspecified.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: These support programs for at-risk– moms make a huge difference in the health of children born into these families.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Sylvia Hancock, First Step Family Support Center; Vanessa Gloria, Jackie Der, VW; Rosalie Lang, Parent.